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THE

MONASTERY.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ON THE

BUILDING

OF A

MONASTERY

IN

DORSETSHIRE.

1795.

OBSTA PRINCIPIIS.

OXFORD

SOLD BY J. COOKE;

AND BY MESSRS. RIVINGTONS, IN LONDON.

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PREFACE.

WE ought ever to look with a ſuſpicious eye upon Papiſts, even when they conduct themſelves with the utmoſt decency and modeſty, and with all that gratitude they owe us for the indulgences we grant them: but when, not contented with theſe, they boldly come forth out of their retirement, and to the great offence of our national worſhip, make a parade of their Superſtitions, build Monaſteries, and exhibit in broad day their Monks and their Nuns, we are not only inclined to conſider our indulgence as abuſed, but to look out for the means of repreſſing their audacity.

If they aſk, why we are ſo much more upon our guard againſt them, than we are againſt Proteſtant Diſſenters, why we are ſo much more tolerant of the one body than we are of the other, we anſwer, becauſe we think the one, leſs dangerous than the other: Diſſenters ſeparate from us, upon mere difference of opinion in Religion; but the Principles of the other, extend to the introduction of all Slavery, civil and religious, and to the actual Subverſion of our Government.

When Papiſts ſhall once renounce the Supremacy of the Pope, then may they expect to be in-

dulged, to the ſame latitude and extent, that Diſſenters are; but while they acknowledge a Foreign Power ſuperior to the Sovereignty of this Kingdom, they muſt not wonder if we diſapprove of their building Monaſteries, and introducing Monks; which we conſider as tending to encourage Popery.

The erection of a building of this ſort on our Southern coaſt, for Monks of the order of la Trapp, has given riſe to the following lines; ſince the writing of which the author has been aſſured, that a ſimilar one, for Nuns, is erecting in Wiltſhire.

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THE MONASTERY.

WHILE on the ſummit of the cliffs that rear
On Dorſet's coaſts their towering heads to heav'n
Valla * 'mid ſtreaming banners ſits, and far
Over the deep extends his ranging eye,
Ready to give alarm ſhould hoſtile ſhip
Or ſquadron ſteering tow'rds our coaſt be kenn'd,
Shall we below ſee Monks and Friars, foes
More formidable, land, and give no ſign
No ſignal of alarm? Such, have arriv'd:
Into yon Cave that yawneth in the rock
We ſaw them enter: on their heads they wore
Grey hoods, like pointed cones, that half conceal'd
Their bearded viſages; down to their feet
Floated a tawny robe; about their waiſt

* Lieutenant of the Navy ſtationed at the Signal-Poſt.

Luſty and broad was girt a belt, to which
Beads, bones of Saints, and crucifixes hung.
Not long into the Cavern had they enter'd,
When with loud ſongs and ſolemn chants the rocks
Reſounded. At that hour it was, when Numa
A zealous Papiſt, Lord of the country round,
Was uſed, at the ſhrine that ſtands beneath
His Caſtle's lofty dome, to offer prayer
To Saint Gregoriano: there he now
Was kneeling, and with eyes to him uplifted,
Was counting o'er his beads: he heard, he ſtarted:
Then, liſtening with attention, cried, "I ſeem
To know the modulation of theſe ſounds:
Sure they're the ſongs and ſymphonies that we
Sing on our high and ſolemn feſtivals,
When by the holy dictates of our Church,
We d—— all heretics: 'tis ſo." Thus ſaying
Out at the folding doors he haſten'd down
Towards the ſea. Amid the ragged cliffs
The Cave he ſoon diſcover'd whence the voices
Yet loudly iſſued. "Who are ye, he cried,
Who thus delight the ears of God and men
With holy chantings, ſay? Oh! well I know you,
I know you, heavenly brethren, by your garb:
All hail! behold your friend! the firmeſt friend
That Popery can boaſt! On, follow me,
That Caſtle's mine, theſe lands, theſe territories,

All

All that you ſee is mine, that Church alone
Excepted; on the left, that Manſion yonder
My Prieſt inhabiteth; there ſhall ye dwell,
There all your rites perform till I, long time
Deſirous in this land of heretics
To ſee ſome godly Monks eſtabliſh'd near me,
Shall build a Monaſt'ry." So ſaying, on
He led the hood-wink'd train through avenues
Winding and gloomy, to a Cell, where ſtood
The Prieſt, Pontifico by name, array'd
In Sacerdotal robes and compaſs'd round
With lighted tapers, ready to perform
The miracle of Tranſubſtantiation.
Numa to him, in ſhort addreſs, the Monks
Committed, and withdrew. On ſtrait he went
Home to the Caſtle; there without delay
Artificers from different parts he call'd,
The beſt and ableſt to ſuggeſt, and put
In execution, grand Deſigns. Soon came
Taſteful Aretti, who long time at Rome
Studied the arts: ſimplicity and grace
Mark'd all his plans: Roſella too was there,
The ſymmetry of whoſe chaſte buildings, whether
Palace or Temple, charm'd the critic eye;
And Carlo, born near where old Athens ſtood;
Than whom no artiſt ever liv'd that knew
Better to raiſe to a ſtupendous height

The tapering Spire; nor was the counſel wanting
Of that fam'd Architect, our country's boaſt,
Who in himſelf combining all the ſkill
Of antient and of modern times, hath made
This land another Italy, adorn'd
With many a beauteous pile. Debate now ended,
And from the various plans propos'd, one fram'd,
Strait the foundation-ſtone by Numa's order
Was for a bleſſing to the Friars ſent:
There was it thrice with holy water ſprinkl'd,
And then, laid in the ground. Behold! not far
Beyond the Caſtle's Eaſtern battlement,
Where yonder oaks their venerable heads
Exalt and form a grove, upon which ſpot
The Druids in time paſt their orgies held,
And to their hideous Gods, by the pale light
Of Phœbe, pour'd the ſmoaking blood of men,
Lo there! the Monaſt'ry begins to riſe.
The ſwelling arches and the Gothic windows
Already half appear, the gloomy lodges
The cells and ſolitary cloiſters ſeem
Fit nearly to receive their ghoſtly tenants.
Numa, with admiration theſe ſurveying,
Joyous exclaims, "Holy foundations, hail,
Thrice hail! ſoon ſhall that riſing dome, thoſe aiſles
With echoing ſtrains of melody reſound;
Soon from theſe altars ſhall the fragrant ſmoke

Of

Of burning ſpices curl into the air
In honour of the Saints, who round ſhall ſtand
In yonder niches; there, above all, ſhall ſit
The Queen of Heaven in richeſt robes array'd;
Angels in ſilken veſts ſhall hover round her;
While here, before them we will proſtrate fall
And humbly, as to God, pour forth our prayers.
Let heretics condemn us if they pleaſe,
Pronounce our worſhip heathen, tell us that
The worſhipping of graven Images
Is ſtrictly in God's holy laws forbidden;
Fools! how they little know that the Command,
Which once indeed forbad this ſacred rite,
Is by the Pope, now *, cancell'd from the Bible.
Riſe! ſullen Ghoſt of the eighth Henry, riſe!
Behold theſe walls, and tear thy ſhadowy locks!
Ah! didſt thou think, ſtern Tyrant, out for ever
To drive us from this land? no! again here
Behold us! not indeed yet numerous,
But daily, ſo becoming: to our Faith
Half Lulo's people † have already turn'd,
And if I err not, ſoon the reſt will follow.
Yet fancy not that I by gifts and bribes

* "The Papiſts in their ordinary Catechiſms and Manuals of devotion, leave out the ſecond Commandment, and divide the tenth into two, to make up the number." Tillotſon. Vol. I. Sermon XI.

† Among whom is the Pariſh-Clerk.

Seduce

Seduce them; no; but if our ſplendid rites,
The pomp and pageantry of our proceſſions,
The very looks, ſolemn and ſanctified
Of our good Monks, their dreſs, their canticles,
(All which are wont to faſcinate the people,)
Should bring us converts, that's no fault of mine."
Thus Numa. But on you who rule the land,
And you, ye Mitred Chiefs, whom it behoves
To guard the Church and State from Popery,
We call, to caſt in headlong ruins down
This riſing Manſion of Idolatry,
This Houſe of Superſtition; from within
Soon elſe will Serpents fierce and deadly iſſue,
Such as from Edom's murky caverns once
Were pour'd in fiery ſwarms on Iſrael's ſons:
Too well ye know with what mad fury Rome
Inſpires her ſons againſt us, how ſhe ever
With unremitting zeal inculcateth
This dreadful leſſon, "Proteſtants, my ſons,
Are objects of God's hatred, he who moſt
Annoyeth them, gains higheſt place in heaven."
Hence, how in every region of the earth
Have they who've borne the name of Proteſtant,
Been the ſad victims of fierce Popiſh rage!
Think on the days of the ninth Charles of France!
On the dire feaſt-day of Bartholomew!

How

How was the earth then * glutted with the blood
Of murder'd Proteſtants, whoſe only crime
Was their Religion! To remembrance call
Gallia's third Henry, and Spain's ruthleſs Philip;
And Savoy's Duke, and all his barbarous deeds
In Piedmont done! O! can ye, without horror,
View, though but with the mental eye, the victims
Skinn'd and left dying in the ſcorching ſun,
Thruſt into ovens, torn by mules aſunder,
Burnt with red irons, at ſlow fires roaſted,
Their nails pluck'd off, their eyes prick'd out, their heads
With ſwallow'd gunpowder blown off, their limbs
Mangled, on hedges hanging? with leſs horror
Can ye behold the Pope, that Holy Father,
Surrounded in full ſtate with all his Prieſts
And Cardinals beneath Mark's ſacred dome,
For one † of theſe atrocious maſſacres
Returning thanks to Heaven's Almighty King?
But ſhould the recollection of theſe deeds
Becauſe they were in diſtant lands committed
Little excite you to regard or fear
The planting in of Catholics among us,
Remember in what ſtreams the precious blood

* Upon this occaſion thirty thouſand Proteſtants were maſſacred. Mod. Univ. Hiſt. Vol. XXIV. page 273.

† See a record in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Linc. C. 10. 3.

Of

Of our forefathers, butcher'd by the hands
Of theſe fell bigots, heretofore hath flow'd!
Think on the deeds of that blood-thirſty Queen,
Who madden'd by the inſpirations dire
Of Popery, publicly in the midſt
Of her Metropolis, into the flames
Caſt her own people; at the ſtake with fire
Surrounded, faſt the pregnant matron bound,
And with dæmoniac joy ſmil'd at her ſcreams!
Then was the babe that from her womb ſprang forth
Toſſed again into the raging flames,
And with its ſhrieking mother burnt to aſhes!
Then was the Mitre, and the Mitred Head
Committed to the flames! Think of the blood
That by the murderous hand of Papiſts ſpilt
Flooded * Hibernia! nor in the black liſt
Of maſſacres that crowd th' hiſtoric page
Let dread November's plot unnotic'd paſs!
O Rome! over men's ſouls, as o'er their bodies,
Mercileſs Tyrant! could no ſmaller crime
Thy foul ambition ſatiate than this,
To ſpill at once all our beſt blood! at once
In everlaſting ruin to o'erwhelm
Our Church, our State, our Liberties, and Laws!

* In this maſſacre, anno 1642, forty thouſand Proteſtants were butchered. Hume, Vol. VI, page 377.

Think

Think ye not, Rulers, that theſe plots, theſe deeds
Of blood, ſhould warn us how we take again
Into our boſom Papiſts? how for them,
Their Monks and Friars, Monaſt'ries we build,
And Nurſeries eſtabliſh? how we rear
With foſtering care a foe, that ſurely will
When ſhe gets ſtrength and vigour, riſe with fury
Up ſuddenly againſt us, and attempt
Our extirpation? What! does ſome one dream
That we in theſe days too enlighten'd are,
Too ſtrong, too well protected by our laws
To fear this fiend? ah! let not this deluſion
Blind and deceive us! Popery's a foe
That only ſues to be deſpiſed, thought
Feeble and undeſigning, to become
Terrible to us: then, while all is lull'd
In peace, ſhe'll whiſper in the people's ear,
Now ſtrike! now by dark plot, or open force,
As beſt may ſuit, whatever bears the name
Of Proteſtant, demoliſh! murder Kings!
Cut all the ſolemn ties that hold together
Them and their people! what are oaths? air-bubbles
Empty and light, which when the Pope breathes on them,
Crack, and like meteors, vaniſh in the wind.
  Theſe are thy leſſons, Popery, theſe thy deeds!
Riſe then, ye Rulers, and with vigour cruſh
The daring efforts which the Fiend now makes

To rear her head among us: to her yoke
Many have bow'd already, more are ſtooping:
Scorn not the danger, but in time prevent it:
Blow out the ſpark, while yet 'tis but a ſpark,
Neglected, it may kindle into Flames.

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